

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00570 021543Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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R 021406Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4327
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0570

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, LY, EG, US
SUBJ: QADHAFI'S MAY DAY SPEECH

1. SUMMARY. DURING HOUR-LONG FIRST OF MAY SPEECH, QADHAFI
HEAPED FURTHER ABUSE ON PRESIDENT SADAT, CRITICIZED US AND
LEFT UNCLEAR THE STATUS OF EGYPTIAN WORKERS IN LIBYA. END
SUMMARY.

2. IN HASTILY ORGANIZED RALLY EVENING OF MAY 1 COLONEL
QADHAFI GAVE RAMBLING, OFTEN DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW, 60-MINUTE
TALK. QADHAFI'S SPEECH WAS PRECEDED BY FIVE WARMUPS BY "LABOR
LEADERS" ALL OF WHOM POUNDED "AGENT SADAT" AND EXPRESSED CRITICISM
OF US SUPPORT FOR EGYPT. GUEST OF HONOR WAS PALESTINIAN LEADER
AHMED JABRIL WHO DELIVERED STANDARD NON-SURRENDER SPEECH
ON PALESTINIAN PROBLEMS. DIPLOMATIC CORPS WAS PRESENT
HAVING BEEN ASSEMBLED AT SEVEN FOR QADHAFI'S SPEECH
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00570 021543Z

WHICH BEGAN AT 9:30 IN THE EVENING.

3. FOLLOWING JABRIL'S PRESENTATION, COLONEL QADHAFI
STATED THAT LIBYA WOULD NEVER SURRENDER ON THE
PALESTINIAN ISSUE EVEN IF ALL OTHER ARAB STATES
FOLLOWED CAPITULATORY POLICIES. THE ONLY SOLUTION,
HE SAID, WAS FOR PALESTINIANS TO RETURN TO THEIR

HOMELAND AND FOR JEWISH IMMIGRANTS FROM EUROPE TO RETURN TO THEIR PLACES OF ORIGIN.

4. QADHAFI AGAIN BRANDED EGYPTIAN LEADER SADAT A US AGENT, A FACT CONFIRMED BY US PRESS, AND CITED INGRATITUDE OF EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT DESPITE PAST GENEROSITY OF LIBYA TOWARD EGYPT. HE NOTED THE BUILD UP OF EGYPTIAN MILITARY STRENGTH ON LIBYAN BORDER SAYING EGYPT SEEMED TO FORGET THAT THE ENEMY WAS ISRAEL AND NOT HER BROTHER ARAB STATE. HE RECALLED PAST FORBEARANCE WITH EGYPT LAST SEPTEMBER WHEN HE CHOSE NOT TO RESPOND TO EGYPTIAN PROVOCATIONS BUT RATHER OFFERED FOOD AND SUPPLIES TO EGYPTIAN TROOPS ON HIS BORDER. HE SAID IF HE NOW CHOSE TO FOLLOW SADAT'S EXAMPLE BY BUILDING UP LIBYAN MILITARY FORCES ACROSS THE BORDER, A DANGER SITUATION WOULD DEVELOP. SADAT, WHOSE OWN COUNTRY WAS OVERPOPULATED AND COLLAPSING ECONOMICALLY, WAS PLAYING WITH FIRE. LIBYA, FAR FROM BEING ALONE, HAD SUCH FRIENDS AS CUBA AND USSR WHICH WOULD STAND BY.

5. THE US, QADHAFI ASSERTED, HAD PUT LIBYA ON A BLACK LIST BECAUSE LIBYA REFUSED TO COOPERATE WITH US PLANS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST. MOREOVER, US PLANS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD NOT LEAD TO PEACE. HE CONDEMNED US FOR SELLING MILITARY TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT TO IRAN, EGYPT AND RECENTLY SUDAN, WHILE DECLINING TO DELIVER AIRCRAFT THAT LIBYA HAD BOUGHT AND PAID FOR. USING A COMMON EXPRESSION, HE SAID IN EFFECT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TRIPOL 00570 021543Z

TO HELL WITH THE PLANES AND TO HELL WITH THE US.

6. ON THE SUBJECT OF FUTURE OF EGYPTIAN WORKERS QADHAFI WAS INCONCLUSIVE BUT THREATENING. EARLIER SPEAKERS HAD CALLED FOR THEIR DEPARTURE AND HE HIMSELF BELIEVED THEY SHOULD PROBABLY GO. NEVERTHELESS, HE WAS GOING TO REFER QUESTION TO THE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES FOR FINAL DECISION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE EGYPTIANS WERE BROTHERS AND WELCOME IN LIBYA, BUT BECAUSE OF SADAT'S NEFARIOUS POLICY WHERE WAS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME OF THEM WOULD BE USED AGAINST LIBYA.

7. QADHAFI PUT FORWARD FEW NEW THOUGHTS. HIS STYLE WAS STRIDENT BUT PERHAPS DEFENSIVE. ABUSE OF SADAT AND SCORN FOR THE US OCCUPIED A GOOD PORTION OF HIS TALK. AUDIENCE RESPONSE, EXCEPT FOR THE PROFESSIONAL CLAUQUE, WAS LIMITED AND THE ASSEMBLED CROWD PROBABLY NUMBERED LESS THAN TWO THOUSAND. UNLIKE SEPTEMBER

SPEECH OF LAST YEAR, MAY DAY SPEECH HAS NOT CLEARED
ATMOSPHERE EVEN TEMPORARILY. STATUS OF EGYPTIAN
COMMUNITY, WHICH IS UNDERSTANDLY BECOMING MORE APPRE-
HENSIVE, REMAINS MURKY. DECLARATION THAT THE PEOPLE'S
COMMITTEES WILL DETERMINE ULTIMATE OUTCOME ALLOWS
QADHAFI TIME TO DECIDE ON FUTURE COURSE OF ACTIONS.
IN SHORT, HE SEEMS TO BE KEEPING OPTIONS OPEN.
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